

international fishery management organization or agreement, until such time as conservation and management measures consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, and other relevant instruments are adopted and implemented to regulate such vessels and fisheries; and

(2) the United States calls upon the member nations of the United Nations to adopt a resolution at its October meeting to protect the living resources of the high seas from destructive, illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing practices.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, as many of my colleagues are aware, we have been engaged in a long fight to bring international fishing up to the standards we have here in the United States under the Magnuson Stevens Act. The Senate passed this important measure by unanimous consent this past June. One of the most important sections of the bill deals with destructive fishing practices conducted by foreign vessels on the high seas that are not subject to any kind of international regulation and control.

The high seas comprise more than half of the planet's surface, yet only 25 percent of this area is regulated by any regional fishery management organization. Management of fishing on the high seas is patchy at best. Some areas like the donut hole in the Bering Sea off my State of Alaska have adopted strict and effective management measures. However, too many areas have not, and without an effective management regime, destructive fishing practices will continue to be conducted by foreign fleets.

In the United States our fishermen must adhere to an extensive set of management and conservation requirements which are laid out in the Magnuson Stevens Act. The eight regional councils located around the United States and the Caribbean Islands are a model of innovative and effective management approaches.

In contrast, management internationally and especially with respect to high seas bottom trawling is sadly lacking. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing as well as expanding industrial foreign fleets and high bycatch levels are monumental threats to sustainable fisheries worldwide. These unsustainable and destructive fishing practices on the high seas threaten the good management that takes place in U.S. waters.

One of the proudest moments of my Senate career was going to the United Nations to fight and end the use of large scale driftnets on the high seas. We now have the opportunity to influence the effects of unregulated high seas bottom trawling. The outlines of an agreement on unregulated bottom trawling on the high seas will be discussed at the UN beginning on October 4th. There is clear political consensus that action is needed and the United States should take the lead in protecting our oceans.

The bipartisan resolution I am introducing today with our co-chairman

Senator INOUE and 16 other Senators calls on the United Nations to put an end to unregulated fishing practices on the high seas. It is my hope that the United States will work to secure adoption of a United Nations General Assembly Resolution calling on nations to stop their vessels from conducting illegal, unreported, and unregulated destructive high seas bottom trawling until conservation and management measures to regulate it are adopted.

SENATE RESOLUTION 611—SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA, POLITICAL PARTIES, CIVIL SOCIETY, RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE PEOPLE OF NIGERIA FROM ONE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT TO ANOTHER INTO THE GENERAL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN APRIL 2007

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. DEWINE) submitted the following resolution; which was:

S. RES. 611

Whereas the United States maintains strong and friendly relations with Nigeria and values the leadership role that the Nigeria plays throughout the continent of Africa, particularly in the establishment of the New Partnership for African Development and the African Union;

Whereas Nigeria is an important strategic partner with the United States in combating terrorism, promoting regional stability, and improving energy security;

Whereas Nigeria has been, and continues to be, a leading supporter of the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States by contributing troops to operations in Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Kuwait, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda, and Sudan;

Whereas past corruption and poor governance have resulted in weak political institutions, crumbling infrastructure, a feeble economy, and an impoverished population;

Whereas political aspirants and the democratic process of Nigeria are being threatened by increasing politically-motivated violence, including the assassination of 3 gubernatorial candidates in different states during the previous 2 months; and

Whereas the Chairperson of the Independent National Electoral Commission has—

(1) announced that governorship and state assembly elections will be held on April 14, 2007;

(2) stated that voting for the president and national assembly will take place on April 21, 2007; and

(3) vowed to organize free and fair elections to facilitate a smooth democratic transition: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the importance of Nigeria as a strategic partner and long-time friend of the United States;

(2) acknowledges the increasing significance of the leadership of Nigeria throughout the region and continent;

(3) commends the decision of the National Assembly of Nigeria to reject an amendment to the constitution that would have lifted the existing 2-term limit and allowed for a third presidential term;

(4) encourages the Government of Nigeria and the Independent National Electoral Commission to demonstrate a commitment to successful democratic elections by—

(A) developing an aggressive plan for voter registration and education;

(B) addressing charges of past or intended corruption in a transparent manner; and

(C) conducting objective and unbiased recruitment and training of election officials;

(5) urges the Government of Nigeria to respect the freedoms of association and assembly, including the right of candidates, members of political parties, and others—

(A) to freely assemble;

(B) to organize and conduct public events; and

(C) to exercise those and other rights in a manner free from intimidation or harassment;

(6) urges a robust effort by the law enforcement and judicial officials of Nigeria to enforce the rule of law, particularly by—

(A) preventing and investigating politically-motivated violence; and

(B) prosecuting those suspected of such acts;

(7) urges—

(A) President Bush to ensure that the United States supports the democratic gains made in Nigeria during the last 8 years; and

(B) the Government of Nigeria to actively seek the support of the international community for democratic, free, and fair elections in April 2007; and

(8) expresses the support of the United States for coordinated efforts by the Government of Nigeria and the Independent National Electoral Commission to work with political parties, civil society, religious organizations, and other entities to organize a peaceful political transition based on free and fair elections in April 2007 to further consolidate the democracy of Nigeria.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 121—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT JOINT CUSTODY LAWS FOR FIT PARENTS SHOULD BE PASSED BY EACH STATE, SO THAT MORE CHILDREN ARE RAISED WITH THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A FATHER AND A MOTHER IN THEIR LIVES

Mr. AKAKA submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. CON. RES. 121

Whereas, in the Fatherhood Program provided for in section 119 of H.R. 240, as introduced in the House of Representatives on January 4, 2005, it states that—

(1) in approximately 84 percent of the cases where a parent is absent, that parent is the father;

(2) if current trends continue, half of all children born today will live apart from one of their parents, usually their father, at some point before they turn 18 years old;

(3) where families (whether intact or with a parent absent) are living in poverty, a significant factor is the father's lack of job skills;

(4) committed and responsible fathering during infancy and early childhood contributes to the development of emotional security, curiosity, and math and verbal skills;

(5) an estimated 19,400,000 children (27 percent) live apart from their biological fathers; and

(6) 40 percent of the children under age 18 not living with their biological fathers had